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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1758
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4693
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3905
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0581
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 2153
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 6059
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2601
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SUBJECT: SPECIAL REPORT: INDIAN MEDIA WELCOMES "END OF THE WAR," REMINDS SRI LANKA OF RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD TAMILS

Summary: The Indian media shed no tears for the LTTE or its slain leader Prabhakaran, saying a continuum of blunders lay behind their downfall. Editorials expressed relief at the "end of the war," but reminded the Sri Lankan government of its responsibility to rehabilitate the Tamils and craft an enduring political solution based on devolution of power. Commentary from India's leading English and language newspapers follows. End summary.

"END OF THE WAR" - THE HINDU English daily

11. (BEGIN EXCERPT): "President Rajapakse has achieved what no previous Sri Lankan leader came close to doing: securing the integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka by freeing it from the malevolent challenge of the LTTE. Now, in the post-Prabhakaran era, he needs to address two big tasks: rehabilitation of hundreds of thousands of Tamils who have been through a prolonged nightmare, and crafting an enduring political solution based on far-going devolution of power to the Tamils in their areas of historical habitation.... India, which has excellent relations with its southern neighbor, can make a constructive difference by coming up with a massive rehabilitation package for the North and encouraging Colombo to fast-track the political solution. (END EXCERPT)

"DEATH & RECONCILIATION" - THE TIMES OF INDIA English daily

12. (BEGIN EXCERPT): Colombo may have reason to be happy about its military success against the LTTE but it must refrain from adopting a triumphal approach towards the minority Tamil population. The end of the LTTE must be seen as the beginning of a new phase, in which Colombo's emphasis should be on winning the trust of the beleaguered Tamils who have experienced the worst of the war. (END EXCERPT)

"COLOMBO'S MOMENT" - THE INDIAN EXPRESS English daily

13. (BEGIN EXCERPT): "That closure is of immense significance in India, of course, with the LTTE's defeat coming 18 years after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, almost to the day.... This victory is an accomplishment that's come with huge costs in terms of civilian deaths and displacement. To validate the argument that sovereign nations have the onus of clearing their territory of terrorist infrastructure, Colombo needs to capture the moment with generosity, humane and political, to its Tamil civilians. Ending a civil war means not just defeating the insurgents, but effecting reconciliation." (END EXCERPT)

"NOW WIN THE PEACE" - HINDUSTAN TIMES English daily

14. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "No country could be more relieved than India at the thought of peace returning to Sri Lanka. Even if the LTTE hadn't claimed the lives of an

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ex-prime minister and hundreds of Indian soldiers, the nearby presence of a fierce combination of repressed nationalism and terrorist tactics represented a grave threat to Indian security.... Colombo needs a magnanimous and transparent rehabilitation program." (END EXCERPT)

"COLOMBO NOW HAS TO DELIVER" -- NEW INDIAN EXPRESS English daily

15. (BEGIN EXCERPT)"Tamil sensitivities have to be considered, because the people whose cause the Tigers represented with such ardor and so much bloodshed must be feeling particularly vulnerable and hopeless, even those who had no love for Prabhakaran. Colombo has a duty to assure them that they will not be victimized or treated as second-class citizens." (END EXCERPT)

"CEASEFIRE" - DAILY NEWS & ANALYSIS English daily

16. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "India must encourage, even pressure the Sri Lankans to speed up reconciliation and reach out to Tamils who genuinely have a sense of being second class citizens in their own country. Mahinda Rajapaksa and his government must show political large-heartedness and clearly demonstrate that they have the interests of Tamils at heart." (END EXCERPT)

"PYRRHIC VICTORY" - DECCAN HERALD English daily

17. (BEGIN EXCERPT)"Prabhakaran's intransigence on the question of creation of Tamil Eelam and his dismissal of the political option were obstacles in the path of a negotiated solution to the conflict. With his exit, that obstacle has been removed. The Sri Lankan government has an opportunity now to push a political solution." (END EXCERPT)

"AN ERA ENDS" - DECCAN CHRONICLE English daily

18. (BEGIN EXCERPT)"In all these post-war measures, the vital role of the international community, particularly that of India, to get President Rajapakse to keep his promises cannot be underestimated. Colombo has, after all, repeatedly acknowledged New Delhi's assistance in

its war against the Tamil Tigers; so the Indian government is fully justified in demanding that Sri Lanka keep its part of the bargain." (END EXCERPT)

"IN EVERY DROP OF BLOOD" - DINAMANI Tamil daily

¶9. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "The genuine demands of the Sri Lankan Tamils must be fulfilled. Until then, every Tamil woman will give birth to a 'Tiger' there." (END EXCERPT)

"END OF A DICTATOR" -- PRAJAVANI Kannada daily

¶10. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "The Sri Lankan government should understand that the problems of Tamils will not end with the killing of LTTE leader Prabakaran. Several

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Prabakarans will emerge if the problems are not solved." (END EXCERPT)

"END OF THE BLOODY HISTORY" - EENADU Telugu daily

¶11. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "The Rajapakse Government now has to concentrate on providing satisfaction and equal rights to the Tamil youth in Sri Lanka. It also has to concentrate on getting the people in Northern Sri Lanka into civil society." (BEGIN END EXCERPT)

"INDIA'S FAILURE" - RASHTRIYA SAHARA Hindi daily

¶12. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "What bigger failure could be India's than the fact that the Tamils cried desperately for our help, and we could not come to the rescue of the common Tamil in Sri Lanka?" (END EXCERPT)

"END OF VIOLENT STRUGGLE" - RASHTRIYA SAHARA Urdu daily

¶13. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "After eliminating the LTTE, the world's most dreaded terrorist outfit, it is now the responsibility of the Sri Lankan government to win over the hearts and minds of the country's Tamil population." (END EXCERPT)

"CONFLICT OVER, ISSUES REMAIN" - LOKMAT Marathi daily

¶14. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "The death of a particular militant leader cannot ensure peace in the region. The Sri Lankan government has to appreciate the reasons for the rise of separatist sentiments... and as a responsible neighbor India needs to convince Sri Lanka to deal with the situation cautiously." (END EXCERPT)

"PRABHAKARAN'S END" - GUJARAT SAMACHAR Gujarati daily

¶15. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "The Sri Lankan security forces' swiftness in killing LTTE chief Prabhakaran during combat operations deserves kudos, and demonstrates the political acumen of Sri Lankan authorities." (END EXCERPT)

"END OF LANKA WAR" - ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA Bengali daily

¶16. (BEGIN EXCERPT) "President Rajapakse should keep in mind that the ethnic trouble in Sri Lanka will not end till the issue of autonomy for the Tamils is settled. The future of Indo-Sri Lankan relations depends on whether or not... Colombo gives due importance to Delhi's concern over Beijing's growing presence in the Indian Ocean." (END EXCERPT)

BURLEIGH